

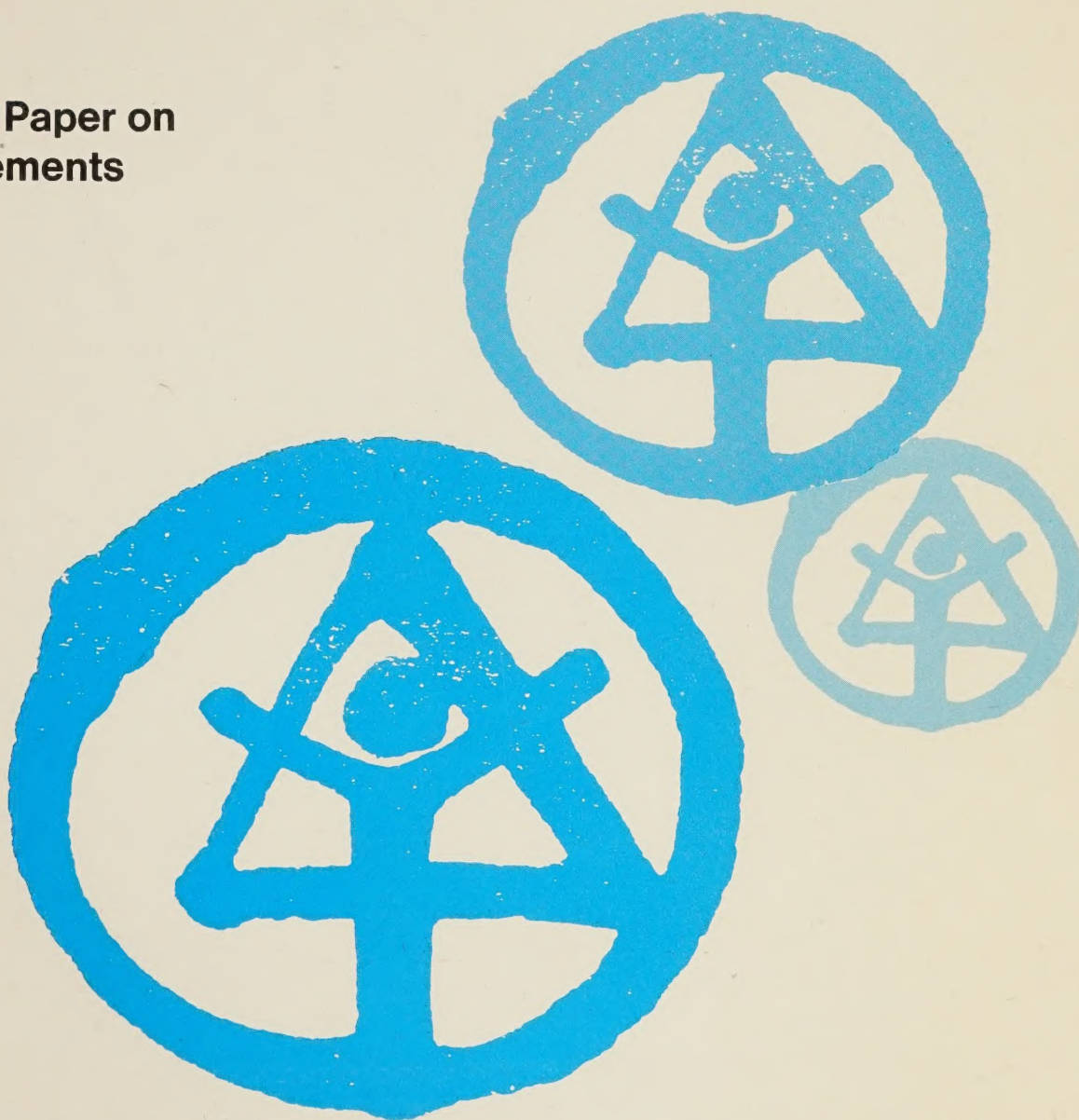
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WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

A Discussion Paper on
Human Settlements
in Canada



Canadian Habitat Secretariat
May 1976

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A Discussion Paper on the Future
of Human Settlements in Canada



Canadian Habitat Secretariat
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FOREWORD

This report is being published and distributed by the Canadian Habitat Secretariat as a contribution to the debate on human settlements policies in Canada. The focal point for this debate is the HABITAT conference, but discussion will certainly continue for a long time to come.

This paper was prepared by Chris Burke and Mary Pearson. The views are theirs and the paper does not in any way reflect government policy. Rather, it challenges people by asking some key questions and offering some answers about where Canada's human settlements are headed.

The intent is to provoke discussion, not just around the time of HABITAT, but on a longer-term basis. HABITAT should be the beginning of debate, not the end. I hope the views and concerns raised by this paper will reach all people and agencies involved with the planning and development of our human settlements.

J.W. MacNeill
Commissioner-General



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1. PREFACE

This paper looks to the future. It does so through the perspective of human settlements, which is the theme of HABITAT. The perspective is valuable on two grounds.

First, human settlements are the focal point through which the actions of government and the private sector affect the everyday lives of people. Put more grandly, the quality of human settlements is the truest measure of any civilization. How well did people live? How well do people live?

Second, the perspective stresses the needs of people: the phrase is human settlements. This paper is primarily addressed to the conflict between what we call "The Basic Myth", a statement of the aspirations of many, if not most, Canadians; and such realities as resource shortages, inequalities and inequities between individuals and regions, and fiscal restraint. To some extent this conflict can be resolved by ingenuity, by new technologies, and by discovery of new resources, but it also demands adjustments by Canadians, by the people who live in Canada's human settlements.

To begin with, then, we establish the setting: the Basic Myth and a short overview of Canada's present position. Then two pervasive issues, land and energy, are considered. The following three sections look at human settlements in three perspectives: the national or provincial - looking at the system of settlements; the metropolitan or urban region level - the shape of settlements; and finally, the perspective from within the settlement. The final chapter of this paper looks at emerging themes, the broad challenges that Canada faces in human settlements.

2. THE SETTING

2.1 The Basic Myth

"Me? I don't expect much out of life. Just the basics. I like to keep things simple. A steady job, of course, with regular pay increases. A house? Sure I want my own house. A four-bedroom house, Tudor-style I guess, with a good sized lot. Maybe a patio out back so I can have the neighbours over for steaks. I'd like a two-car garage too. We need two cars because my wife wants one for shopping and I don't really like taking the bus to work. And I guess if I really thought about it, I'd like a lakeside cottage where the kids could water ski in the summer and I could hunt and ski-doo later on. Really, you know, just the basics."

This language makes the dream seem ridiculous, but these sorts of objectives have not been unrealistic in the past thirty years. Many people have achieved them, and others have achieved a part of them. In a situation where energy was cheap, where labour and capital were plentiful, and where economic growth was the predominant concern, the pursuit of these objectives has inspired economic growth and provided employment without significant economic and social repercussions.

Changes in realities and understandings have undermined this dream. The energy crisis has brought home the need to conserve energy, and the traditional suburban home and extended commuting may no longer fit the realities for most Canadians. The suburban move has also led to congestion and pollution from extensive automobile use.

Rising prices have demonstrated that land for housing is scarce and difficult to provide. Local governments are increasingly forcing new developments to bear the true costs of servicing with water, sewer and roads, and lot prices have increased three, four or even five times over in the past decade.

What was once a reasonable dream is becoming remote and even irresponsible. Pollution and congestion are costs to all, not just to those that create them. So are unsightly dwellings, car-dumps, garish commercial strips, open quarries and

unhealthy drainage systems. Too often, one person's septic tank pollutes a neighbour's well. The economists call all these situations "externalities", and point out that market systems tend to ignore them. As they have grown in importance, local governments and on occasion provincial and federal governments have had to intervene to reduce the inequities.

Zoning has restricted the unbridled freedom to build. Other development controls are being used, and everywhere, more are being considered. Land use is no longer a purely private business: it is an affair of state. And this applies to industries, to farms, to forest operations, to mines, to all who use the land.

Similarly in the rest of the economy, restraints are emerging. Seat belts are made compulsory, to protect all road users. Advertising is examined for the truthfulness of its claims. New developments are subjected to public debate. Speed limits are lowered. Drunken driving is prosecuted. Airline baggage must be stowed under the seat in front of you. Industries must meet increasingly rigid environmental laws. Women, native peoples and others must be granted equal opportunities.

All of these, from the most petty to the largest imposition, are restraints on the excesses inherent in an open society. To some Canadians they are seen as infringements on freedom, but to most Canadians they are protections of more important freedoms, for the present and for the future.

With these changes, the basic myth is changing too. The conflicts in human settlement issues reflect the slow process by which the myth comes into line with new realities.

2.2 Human Settlements in Canada, 1976

The present Canadian situation is shown in considerable detail in Canada's National Report to HABITAT. However, a few points can be highlighted here with the knowledge that much more detail can readily be obtained.

To start with, the world context has to be considered.

Population growth is on an exponential that doubles every 25-30 years; food production is not keeping pace, and a third of the world's population is suffering from malnutrition; put the two together, and starvation becomes more prevalent over time.

Natural resources are becoming scarcer: the developed world has used cheap energy and other resources; now, the available resources cost more, and even if costs do not change, prices will increase as resource nations demand a higher yield on their resources to reflect the real costs of depletion.

But above all, the world shows inequalities: between rich nations and poor nations; between rich and poor within nations. Tragically, the most severe inequalities within nations are in the Third World. However, Canada must assess its role with respect to the Third World, as a user and supplier of resources. And Canadians must look at the inequalities within the nation.

Within Canada, the richest 10% earn 25% of total income, while the poorest 10% earn only 2-1/2%: their average income is one-tenth that of the richest. Yet Canada can be justly proud of the basic equities that have been achieved. Health and education services of a high standard are universally available. Income maintenance programs ensure that all Canadians have some basic income. Strong labour unions have been effective in increasing labour's share of total income. There are signs that housing, dental care and day care are becoming basic services, which should be available to all, regardless of income.

But major inequalities exist. Regional disparity continues despite major efforts by governments to overcome it. The native peoples of Canada do not enjoy the levels of income and education that most Canadians do, and find their traditional way of life in constant jeopardy. French-speaking Canadians are still concerned about the preservation of an authentic Francophone culture, and their incomes are typically lower than those of Anglophone Canadians. Women are often paid less for the same work as is done by men, and find promotion and advancement more difficult to attain.

In all these cases, however, there is room for optimism, particularly where people are organizing to improve their own situation, and to press their case to

governments and to the people of Canada. Native peoples are organizing to secure control over resources and to preserve their way of life. The French language is being protected and encouraged by federal and provincial action, and access to higher paying jobs has been enormously aided as a result of dramatic improvements in the educational system in Quebec. Women are mobilizing for political action, and are entering the labour force, pushing female participation rates up, and demanding recognition in higher income brackets.

It may seem odd to consider income distribution and equity first, but the human settlement perspective is primarily concerned with the human dimension. Aggregate figures are often meaningless in this perspective, and yet are often the only measures available for analysis. The views on settlements in the rest of this paper depend largely on such aggregate measures, and thus it is important to point out the equity factors first.

In terms of an overview, what else has to be considered? Three factors should be briefly noted. First, Canada is an urban nation. Over half of all Canadians live in the twenty-two Metropolitan Areas. More than three-quarters of the population live in urban areas of over 1,000 people.

Second, most Canadians are employed in the service sector, and most of these jobs, plus most manufacturing jobs, are to be found in urban areas. Resource development is still an important part of the Canadian economy, perhaps still the most important part, but only in terms of output. It directly employs relatively few Canadians. These industries account for the major part of Canada's exports, but they are highly capital-intensive. This separation of output and employment is likely to continue, with accompanying pressures of growth in urban areas.

Third, the pattern of settlement reflects these economic forces and a range of geographical factors. Settlement is highly concentrated, predominantly in the southernmost parts of the nation.

This very brief overview serves to establish the basic economic and geographic context of human settlements in Canada. All of these factors will be addressed in more detail in succeeding sections of this paper.

3. TWO PERVASIVE ISSUES

Two sectoral issues pervade all discussion of human settlements, particularly in the Canadian context.

Both land and energy have been viewed as plentiful, if not in infinite supply in Canada. Urban growth and the energy crisis have made it clear that this view is not tenable. Human settlements policy must in future directly incorporate measures for the management of these two fundamental resources.

3.1 Land

Although life started in the oceans of the earth, it is the land that today forms the basis of life on earth. As civilization has developed, the traditional pattern has been for productive agricultural lands to be of the highest value. Today in Canada, and indeed in most of the world, urban land demands the highest price.

This price reflects the shift of focus in modern society. The urban areas are where the jobs are, and where a wide array of consumption needs are met.

In terms of the prevailing concerns of Canadian citizens, there are three major problems associated with land. First, the price of land is high. Second, there is not enough serviced land available for urban development. Third, there is a desperate need to preserve agricultural land for future production.

These three concerns are, unfortunately, inherently contradictory; simple policies dealing with only one of these problems will exacerbate others. For example, agricultural lands are typically cheaper to develop than rocky or swampy terrain. In this sense, the preservation of agricultural land is likely to increase the costs of development for residential land, and thus the price of residential land. If the market cannot absorb these high costs, this will lead to a further shortage of serviced land.

Further, urban planning solutions to reduce the costs of basic services often lead to higher residential densities. In an open market situation, this also leads to higher land prices.

In order to deal with these conflicts, a coordinated package of policies is required. This may necessitate direct government intervention to control and, to some extent, to limit the operation of the market.

The approaches taken to this problem in Canada vary greatly. In many cases, the market is still operating with virtually no government intervention. In these cases, there is a substantial risk of losing agricultural lands, and of providing speculative profit at the expense of the home owner. Some zoning restrictions are applied, but these are essentially negative restraints, limiting density, which in effect increases the threat to agricultural lands. In some areas, stringent development controls have been used to limit the sprawling nature of the urban area, but this tends to increase urban land prices.

In some cases, where the threat to agricultural lands has been particularly acute, the more senior level of government, typically the province, has intervened to acquire agricultural lands, or to exercise direct control over lands with agricultural potential. The most striking example of this is the work of the British Columbia Land Commission, which must review any proposal to use designated agricultural lands for other than agricultural purposes. Finally, there are some examples of direct market intervention in the form of land banking and land assembly, directed towards keeping prices of serviced land to a minimum.

The land question has been compounded in emotional and political terms by the question of ownership, especially the ownership of recreational lands. In some areas of Canada, foreign ownership of the very best recreational areas has assumed massive proportions. In Prince Edward Island, legislation has been passed which requires non-residents wishing to purchase more than 10 acres of land to apply to and receive permission from the provincial Cabinet.

Quite clearly, the trend in land development and control is towards a greater array of government interventions in order to balance the various competing interests. Ultimately, land is the medium through which local governments can exert control, can direct the growth and shape of human settlements. Municipalities, and in some cases the provinces, are beginning to look to new instruments. Some have experimented with development controls and tax systems which favour agricultural development, charging a higher tax on idle land, thus discouraging speculation;

consideration has been given to making a clear distinction between the tax on land and the tax on improvements to land, which again would tend to discourage the holding of land within developing areas, thus increasing supply and reducing price; some cities have been foresighted or fortunate enough to have been able to place large tracts of land in public ownership, and can thus exert a substantial influence over land supply; and, some governments are working with developers in joint ventures, to ensure that land is developed when needed, while meeting both private and social objectives.

3.2 Energy

Canada is one of the most energy intensive nations in the world. Why is this? There are a number of reasons which arise from our industrial structure, our geography and our history.

In the post war period, Canada purposely pursued a policy to attract industrial investment, and thus capital intensive industries were made more attractive than labour intensive industries. Capital intensive industries use more energy.

Geography is obviously a factor with transportation distances and with a climate that demands considerable energy use in winter, while also making it desirable to consume energy for air conditioning in summer.

And Canadians have adopted a wasteful lifestyle, squandering large amounts of energy on the automobile, ranch-style homes, and household appliances.

Recent events, particularly the energy crisis brought on by the attempts of the oil producing and exporting nations to obtain a more significant yield from their varied resources, have challenged some assumptions about unlimited energy resources. Canadians have discovered that we really don't have that much energy to spare.

This is particularly chilling for, in the face of even modest population growth whereby Canada may reach thirty million people by the end of the century, estimates predict a need for two and a half to three times present annual energy supplies, if Canada wishes to maintain economic growth and a high consumption living style.

The problem facing Canada in terms of energy is clearly one of supply and demand. On the supply side, there is almost universal agreement that major dependence must be on electrical energy. Some of it can be generated with coal, but, in purely economic terms, much of the supply increase must be generated by means of nuclear power plants. It has been estimated that, to meet projected needs for the year 2000, over a hundred nuclear power plants will be required. To put that into perspective, it should be mentioned that there are only seven currently in operation and four under construction in Canada. The capital requirements to meet these demands will, of course, be tremendous, as will be the concerns about radiation, plant siting, and waste disposal. Given the uncertainties in these areas, demand reduction will have to be the major tool for maintaining energy balance for the next 25 years.

Looking at the potential for reducing demands for energy, some fundamental changes in lifestyle become inevitable. Simple measures will help such as using smaller cars and insulating our homes. New housing designs to use solar energy for space heating are currently being tested. It is probable however that the resultant gains will be inadequate and that more restraint will be required.

Canadians will have to shift away from the automobile towards the use of transit and even the use of our feet. New urban designs will be encouraged that feature dense clusters of housing with employment, shopping, recreation and residential activities all closely grouped to reduce transportation distances.

Consumption patterns must move away from physical goods such as automobiles, television, dishwashers, and snowmobiles. This in effect means a fundamental change in value system as so many of today's images of progress depend upon the production of even more goods.

What kind of reduction can all this achieve? It could fairly easily result in a 20 per cent reduction of demand, but that would mean that by the year 2000 Canada would be using twice as much energy as today instead of two and a half times as much.

Eventually, efforts at restraint will probably go beyond voluntarism. Activities which consume large amounts of energy may have to be prohibited. The kinds of restraints that may be legislated are as follows: banning cars in certain key areas,

particularly downtown; strict development controls which would contain urban forms and prevent sprawl; heavy taxation on single family homes within twenty miles of the city, designed to reflect the real cost associated with low density development in large urban areas; high levels of taxation on large cars; rationing of some forms of energy; progressive pricing systems, with prices increasing rather than decreasing with more demand; reworking standards for lighting, heating, air-conditioning, and insulation.

Given the desperate world needs for energy and the uncertainties surrounding nuclear power, this sort of conservation approach may be the only solution, however unpalatable it may seem.

4. THE SYSTEM OF SETTLEMENTS

4.1 National Urban Pattern

The fundamental trends of the last twenty years can be summarized as follows:

- a) The rural farm population has declined, while the urban population of Canada has grown substantially. Canada is becoming a nation of urbanites.
- b) A number of metropolitan areas, particularly those in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia have demonstrated rapid rates of growth in recent years. Canada is not merely becoming urbanized, it is becoming metropolitanized.
- c) Most of the growth in the Canadian population has occurred in Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, with the result that a declining share of the Canadian population resides in the Atlantic Region, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

These trends have caused concern, particularly in those provinces which have experienced lower than average rates of growth. Major efforts have been launched by federal and provincial governments to encourage new kinds of economic development in these lagging areas, in order to provide a suitable standard of living and to balance migration, offering opportunities for people to obtain viable employment and therefore remain in those areas.

More recently, the trends have been criticized from the opposite point of view, as expanding areas want to place some limits on growth, as individuals and communities are becoming aware of the negative side-effects of the growth process.

A continuation of these trends into the future leads to dramatic and disturbing results. Unfortunately, there is far from complete agreement on the trends. However, some numerical conclusions can be drawn, as they are common to virtually all projections.

The population of Canada by the end of the century will be somewhere between 28 and 32 million people, and will most likely be close to 29 or 30 million. It is generally agreed that the existing Census Metropolitan Areas, perhaps with

boundary changes of some sort, will contain over 60% of the Canadian population. It also seems clear that less than 10% of the Canadian population is likely to be statistically rural by that time. (By census definition, rural means people who live in communities of less than 1,000 population.) There is also general agreement that the trends, if continued, would lead to a strong concentration of population, with Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta increasing their share of the total Canadian population from a little less than 55% to over 65%.

There is a general questioning among Canadians as we desert once fertile and prosperous areas - a feeling that something ought to be done. Debate is continuing at all levels of government on the sort of demographic future that should be aimed for. The emerging feeling is that the trend should be moderated: small towns should grow more; lagging areas should get a greater share of the development pie. The most recent figures indicate that at least for the past four years, this has indeed been happening. The Atlantic Region, Saskatchewan and Manitoba seem to have reversed the trend of migration. To what extent this is a "blip" on a long-term pattern of decline has yet to be ascertained.

Although demographic planning is a recent concern, it is clear that if regional balance is to be achieved in Canada, it will not emerge spontaneously, but rather will need encouragement through various forms of government action.

4.2 Regional Disparities

Family income in the least well-off province in Canada is only a little over 60 percent of family income in the richest province. Despite constant efforts, the gap between rich and poor parts of Canada has not closed very much in recent years. However, it has been learned that overcoming disparity means more than merely raising incomes. It also means changing the industrial structure and increasing the level of urbanization, strengthening markets and offering more diversity of employment opportunities.

From 1969 to 1973 the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion operated a Special Areas Program which was oriented towards supporting selected growth centres. Either the timing was right or the program was right, or both, because over that period, the chosen centres made great strides.

In the Atlantic region, for example, Saint John, St. John's, and Halifax-Dartmouth all showed remarkable economic performance. Unemployment rates in these centres were much below provincial averages, and for the past three years, Saint John and Halifax have had unemployment rates well below the national average, and employment growth rates well above the national average.

This performance has highlighted the tremendous problems of intra-regional disparities. For example, incomes for southern New Brunswick are 50 per cent higher than incomes in northern New Brunswick. Saskatoon and Regina have been expanding rapidly, while the rest of the province of Saskatchewan has hardly grown at all. These intra-regional disparities are also urban/rural disparities.

Planning for these regions demands difficult decisions. Should priority go to the successful areas, as in the growth centres approach, and thereby increase internal disparities? Can highways, communications systems, services and other links spread the good effects? Even if they can, it seems that the lagging areas themselves can only take advantage of the spread effects if their own urban centres are relatively well developed. Thus, in addition to supporting the major centres, emphasis tends to be placed on such local centres as Weyburn, Rimouski, Bathurst, Yarmouth and Corner Brook.

The major effort of the federal government is now being directed in terms of General Development Agreements, to pursue development opportunities wherever they can be found without being restricted to the major growth centres. This is a recognition, at least in part, that intra-regional disparity is at least an equal problem with the disparities between the major regions of Canada.

4.3 Instruments for Redistribution

In Canada, efforts towards redistributing population have tended to entice, to cajole, to persuade. Programs have offered incentives to industries to locate jobs in the areas where they are most needed, rather than force individuals to leave established communities at great social cost.

Experiments with forced relocation, notably the resettlement program from the declining fishing out-ports of Newfoundland, and the community consolidation program in the Gaspé area of the Province of Quebec, have not been successful. Basically, they have failed for two reasons: the very concept of resettlement carried too many elements of coercion, and therefore immediately generated opposition; and second, the programs typically underestimated the value and the strength of existing community spirit and enterprise. Ironically, particularly in the Gaspé area, the social animation process, which was originally designed to help people adjust to the need for relocation, may well have served to revive dormant community loyalties.

Industrial incentive programs have been founded on the concept that the first priority is establishing jobs in primary and secondary sector enterprises. Thus, the Regional Development Incentives Act, the prime instrument for encouraging employment in lagging areas, is geared specifically to assisting industry with grants, which vary in size according to the amount of capital invested, and the number of jobs created.

There have been some unfortunate side effects to development efforts. There has been a tendency to indulge in extremely capital intensive projects, which have offered the advantage of high visibility, but have not created very many jobs. The other unfortunate aspect has been encouragement of low wage industries. Although jobs are of fundamental importance, the income level associated with these jobs must also be considered. Low wage industries do not significantly help in overcoming disparity; rather, they entrench it and perpetuate it.

In recent years some major shifts in philosophy and approach in regional development have surfaced. Some of these have been directly incorporated into ongoing programs, others are being adopted more slowly, through new programs, and through relatively subtle shifts in emphasis.

The focus is moving away from the number and towards the quality of jobs, and particularly the income associated with those jobs. The Regional Development Incentives Act has been specifically amended in its regulations to accommodate this change, and will likely never again support "sweat shop" enterprises in lagging regions. In a number of areas, this approach has been further supported by the

development of Manpower programs, to ensure that the local labour force can successfully transfer to high technology enterprises.

Further, the former emphasis on manufacturing has now been broadened in recognition of the importance of the service sector. Although incentive programs for the service sector have not been developed (because it remains true that many service industries are relatively automatic and should not receive direct assistance), this concern has been expressed through consideration of the spatial pattern of employment, through recognition of the need for viable urban centres to increase service sector employment spin-offs from basic activity, and through efforts to bring about vitalization or revitalization of dormant downtown areas.

Development efforts in Canada are also adopting an urban focus. Initially, this urban focus was oriented towards hardware, such as roads, sewers, water supplies and industrial parks. As the importance of the service sector has come to be recognized, this focus has changed. Governments are increasingly concerned with urban amenities. Much development depends on the city's role as a centre of consumption, creating extra employment by import substitution, by taking in local washing rather than buying a new shirt from outside. This new recognition can be seen in the assistance provided by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to such projects as the redevelopment of the historic waterfront in Quebec City, and the waterfront development in Halifax. It is also visible in the increasing sensitivity for the amenities and style of all urban areas including those within the lagging regions.

Another powerful instrument is the decentralization of many government activities to lagging regions and smaller centres. Late in 1975, it was decided to relocate a unit of the federal National Revenue Department to Matane in Eastern Quebec. Manitoba has attempted some decentralization of provincial government agencies.

Urban development and economic development then are inter-related. At the national and provincial level, this means that economic planning and human settlements planning are now being considered together. And at the local level, planning for individual settlements is becoming more comprehensive, involving considerations of economic development, social services, cultural amenities, recreation, and other parts of the total urban fabric; this shift is the topic of the next major chapter of this report.

4.4 Comprehensive Development Planning

The scientific method has made an awkward transition into the social sciences. The basic process of "reduction", of breaking every problem down into smaller and smaller components, and applying highly specific expertise to each, has been a major element in the triumph of technology over the past two hundred years. The breaking down of the Apollo Moon Shots into minute specialized projects is an example of this process.

In planning and management of human settlements, governments have tended to organize their efforts in sectoral terms. The organization of government into vertically separated agencies, dealing with Transportation, with Public Works or with Regional Economic Expansion, reflects the influence of this particular scientific approach.

However, this approach has some severe limitations. As a very simple example, within science, the workings of various parts of the human anatomy can only be properly understood in the context of the whole body. Similarly, in the social sciences, and particularly in human settlements planning, "reductionism" has become suspect. Just as we have recognized that the world itself is finite, and as ecology has come to dominate so much of our thinking, so at the human settlements level, it has become clear that transportation planning cannot be divorced from planning for urban form, and that the economic development of a nation or a region cannot be separated from questions of urban size and population distribution. The first law of ecology applies: "everything is connected to everything else".

At the national scale, there are three broad approaches which are necessary in terms of planning the system of human settlements: first, a demographic approach which is concerned with population growth, and particularly with the rapid growth of some areas occurring simultaneously with decline in others; second, an urban approach, concerned with the growth of urban areas and their increasingly important role; and third, a development approach which is concerned with providing employment opportunities and incomes.

These three approaches are inter-connected. Development is the driving force in modifying population trends, relieving the necessity for out-migration, and even

offering sufficient opportunities for in-migration. This will affect the population distribution. Across all this is the urban perspective: most employment opportunities will be urban; urban concentration will consolidate markets and foster future growth; in urban settings with increased job availability, the birth rate tends to be lower than in rural areas.

Within the provinces, efforts have been made to construct a comprehensive framework. In Ontario, the Design for Development program established a framework within which a number of regions in the province could be planned for in an integrated fashion. While important, this was organized in terms of sub-provincial regions, without the benefit of an integrated statement on interregional questions and the definition of spatial objectives for the province as a whole. In Prince Edward Island, a comprehensive development plan was implemented. This plan, although very broad, is primarily economic, reflecting the more traditional approach to development. It has become apparent however, in the evolution of this plan, that the urban dimension cannot be ignored, and is, in fact, taking on an increasingly important role.

Perhaps the most comprehensive approach has been that of the Province of Manitoba, with the Stay Option program which approaches the problem of economic development from the perspective of individuals within communities.

"The Stay Option represents an attempt by this government to provide people in Winnipeg and in rural and Northern Manitoba with the opportunity to live and work without disadvantage in the particular region of the province in which they have their roots".

Originally conceived in terms of the needs of the rural area, the Stay Option approach also responds to the concerns of Winnipeg residents that the city is growing too quickly. Stay option is an important benchmark in the evolution of public policy in Canada, because it directly addresses the spatial, the economic, and the individual problems associated with the pattern of settlement.

The Stay Option still stands alone, but similar programs are emerging in other provinces. The national and provincial scale has typically not been comprehensive in planning or in implementation, but the message seems now to have taken root. To date, the major effort in comprehensive planning has been at the urban region level. This reflects the importance of the decisions at the urban region level in terms of overall planning.

5. THE SHAPE OF SETTLEMENT: THE URBAN REGION

5.1 Unmanaged Growth

The pressures of population growth and physical size result in a number of economic and social problems in the urban environment. Economic disparity is highlighted by the juxtaposition in the city region of the very poor and very rich in income-segregated neighbourhoods. Rising personal incomes, mobility and increasingly diversified lifestyles generate ever-changing demands for jobs and housing. The impact of technological change is clearly reflected in the city core; old, obsolete and blighted industrial and residential buildings contrast with glass and aluminum office towers. And at the urban fringe are the expressways, the residential subdivisions and the industrial parks of modern suburbia. This urban form leads to the rapid consumption of non-renewable resources in the city region, with increasing demands from industry and with commuters facing ever-longer journeys to work from their appliance-filled bungalows.

The cumulative effect of these phenomena can be devastating to many city dwellers. Personal incomes and mobility do not rise at the same rate for all workers, and not all citizens can reap the benefits of city life or shield themselves from the social and economic costs of change.

The companion to urban growth has been peripheral sprawl, the haphazard spread of scattered low-density residential subdivisions and commercial strips, located at long distances from established employment, cultural and recreational centres.

Urban sprawl has resulted in the loss of prime agricultural and recreational land. At current rates, over 400,000 acres of Canadian farmland per decade are being irrevocably lost to urban encroachment. The Niagara Fruit Belt faces extinction by 1990, and the St. Lawrence Lowlands and the Lower Fraser Valley by the year 2000. The encouragement of industry in the Okanagan Valley, and the possible overflow of Maritime cities into productive valleys underline the same prospect, namely that Canadian agriculture may lose its best lands in a matter of mere decades.

Ironically, the dream of spacious living has not even met the expectations of those who actually live in suburban areas. Because of the haphazard way in which fringe settlement proliferates, it is often inadequately served by basic facilities such as piped water, sewerage, shops, schools and hospitals. When they are provided, the low density of settlement leads to very high costs. Further, these areas are not protected by zoning against noisy airports and speedways, noxious industries, car graveyards and the like.

Over the course of time, the fringe loses its environmental attractions and the process of commuting becomes more arduous. Increasingly, there are signs that some people are starting a counter-trend to rediscover the advantages of city living, in closer proximity to their work and the whole gamut of urban facilities.

5.2 Regional Planning and Urban Form

For the past 30 years, the myth of plenty of land has held sway and planning has emerged as a major issue only in the last decade, as the cost of sprawl in economic, social and aesthetic terms has become evident. Effective regional plans are still few and far between.

The planners can offer technically workable solutions to many of the problems, but it is quite evident that in many cases these conflict so strongly with the basic aspirations of Canadians for space, for the automobile, for the single family home, that they have only slowly been translated into political reality.

Not all planners would agree with specific prescriptions, but the basic techniques that are available can be crudely summarized as follows;

- 1.- densities can be increased to a minimum of 20 persons per acre, perhaps to an average of 30 persons per acre thus lowering site development costs, and facilitating the provision of public transit services;
- 2.- commercial and light industrial uses should be mixed in with residential uses within the context of particular communities, so that people can shop and work close to home, thus reducing travel distances and congestion;
- 3.- downtown areas should be developed as major activity nodes, particularly for commercial and retail activities and for cultural and artistic activities, and should encompass a strong residential component to ensure the maintenance of a high activity level;

- 4.- many activities of a commercial and retail nature that are not highly specialized, and which demand only occasional public access, should be used as the foundations of economic bases within the suburbs, rather than the downtown;
- 5.- parklands should be provided within the urban area on an increasing scale, as the city grows and access to genuinely rural areas becomes more difficult;
- 6.- the urban settlement should be contained, and not be allowed to sprawl and spoil the countryside, taking valuable agricultural lands out of production, and storing up future problems and costs in the provision of sanitary services at a later date.

In summary, the planners would recommend a pattern of development which very clearly distinguishes between the urban setting and the rural setting, in which the urban is truly urban and concentrated, and the rural is unmolested.

The approaches outlined above would bring economic advantages to urban residents. Also, rural residents would benefit from a lessened rate of intrusion into the rural setting, and the cost of basic services would be reduced.

The instruments that are available to most municipal jurisdictions are currently inadequate to bring about such changes. The only generally accepted instrument for development control is zoning, which is contrary to the objectives outlined above, because it imposes maximum densities, rather than minimum densities, and encourages the separation of uses rather than their mixture.

Across Canada, a number of new instruments have been developed and used in various jurisdictions.

In Halifax-Dartmouth, the regional plan has a development boundary. Outside that boundary, only very limited development can take place. Within it, high intensity development is permitted and encouraged, and the control of the phasing of that development rests with the municipalities in the extension of water and sewer services, without which no development is permitted.

In some centres, notably Saskatoon and Red Deer, public land ownership has provided the municipality with a substantial degree of control over the shape and structure of the settlement.

In many jurisdictions, the developer is now made responsible for costs which were formerly borne by the municipality, in particular the provision of roads, the extension of water and sewer services, and in some cases the provision of recreational space and community facilities. This approach brings the true costs of development into the market place, and thereby encourages more efficient use of land.

In other jurisdictions, the costs of sewage collection and disposal are reflected in a frontage charge, rather than in the general taxation, and this again encourages more compact development.

Just as the control of water and sewer services offers effective control, so in some jurisdictions the limiting factor has been highway development, and municipalities have consciously limited the extension of highway facilities, to encourage more intensive and less scattered development.

Finally, steps have been taken to decentralize significant portions of commercial development from the downtown into new nodes. Of particular importance is the decentralization of activities which come directly under government jurisdiction, including federal and provincial offices, and municipal social services.

These new instruments are being brought to bear in order to provide basic control over the urban form, to provide genuinely urban and urbane cities, and to protect the rural inheritance of Canadians.

5.3 Regional Services

Regional planning and urban form establish the shape of settlement, and largely determine much of its character and the costs of servicing, but the day to day decisions have to deal with specific sectors: transportation; water systems; sewage and pollution control; and the physical projects that ultimately determine the level of service.

As urban places grow, and as Canadian society moves further into what is called post-industrialism, demands for new services are being made. Public transit is required as the city expands and dependency on the automobile points to overwhelming congestion. Parks are needed within the city because open country is an hour or more away. Sewage treatment becomes an imperative. New levels of cultural amenities and more sophisticated recreational facilities are required as cities expand. The largest cities have to contain hospitals, special schools and universities to serve a wide area.

These are extra demands and extra costs which put pressure on the taxpayers. It is all the more urgent therefore that lower cost solutions be found. Perhaps the most dramatic shift in recent years has been in our expectations of technology. No longer do we look for solutions to urban problems in terms of the automated jet helicopter of the space comics, or even the sophisticated comfortable mass transit vehicle with magnetic levitation or running on a cushion of air. The space age vehicle is the bus, and if it is going to be displaced in importance in the next 20 years it is probably not going to be by some technological wonder but by bicycles and by pedestrian walkways.

The transportation innovations that Canadians look to as exemplary are those geared towards making the most of existing facilities, and utilizing low cost improvements wherever possible. Three notable programs of this sort have been developed in Vancouver, Halifax and London, Ontario. In these programs, a number of approaches have been taken: staggered working hours to reduce peak hour flows; car pools; turn lanes and curb lanes; bus lay-bys; phased traffic lights; designated bus lanes; moving the bus stop to the middle of the lay-by instead of having it at the front, so as to ease the return to the main traffic flow; lane closures to improve traffic separation; reorganizing of transit routes and schedules.

Some cities have introduced the dial-a-bus; others use express buses, often driving in designated bus lanes, at least in the rush hour periods. Some transit corporations are experimenting with new marketing techniques: Kingston, Ontario, has experimented with advertising on the broadcast media, and has also pioneered the concept of bulk purchases of transit service, through a special arrangement made with Queen's University; in Winnipeg, a free downtown bus service is in operation.

In some jurisdictions, open war is being waged against the expressway and the large automobile. Cities have instituted strict parking controls; the federal government will no longer provide parking space in city centre locations for its employees; and in some cities, major zones have been declared banned to all automobiles. One most desirable by-product of this has been the development of pedestrian malls in the city centre areas, of which the Sparks Street Mall in Ottawa and Granville Street in Vancouver are the best known examples.

In water supply and waste disposal, most major urban areas are now in the process of increasing the level of treatment on sewage, and virtually no new developments are occurring in Canada without some provision being made for proper sewage treatment.

The same philosophy is being applied in the area of solid waste; rather than looking for technical solutions for the perceived exponential growth of garbage, the question is being turned around to determine whether all that garbage really needs to be created. In some provinces we are recycling paper, aluminum and steel cans; banning the use of cans and non-returnable bottles for soft drinks and beer, or alternatively imposing compulsory deposits on these containers; there is also some questioning by consumers of the necessity of fancy packaging, to separate each piece of cheese, or to triple wrap everything one buys.

The concept of reducing demand has not yet had much impact on our attitudes to water supply. As demands increase, provision is being made for new sources, and for new equipment to increase the flow from available sources of water. As costs increase, new facilities can lead to a doubling or even tripling of the price of water, and in future it will likely become more usual to recycle coolant waters, to reduce the number of gallons required to flush the average toilet, and to substitute conservation for expansion.

Other regional services are worthy of mention because they are in a state of change. In health services, the emphasis is shifting from curative medicine to preventative medicine and environmental concerns, and the development of out-patient emergency hospitals within the community, to serve immediate needs, with the major hospitals used only for the most serious cases. In the area of regional parks, public demands are increasing, and the inadequacy of the regional and municipal tax bases renders it extremely difficult to engage in major park developments. The federal government has developed a program entitled "Agreements for Recreation and Conservation" which provides for the joint development with the provinces of parks of heritage and recreational interest. Proximity to urban centres - Halifax, Montreal, Southwestern Ontario, Winnipeg - is an important element in the selection of sites. This program will assist the overall capability for park development but admittedly meets only a small portion of the need.

Finally, two major changes are occurring in downtown areas. The first is a major shift towards historic redevelopment, with the Privateer's Wharf in Halifax and Place Royale in Quebec City as prime examples. Public taste has changed significantly so that not only is renovation occurring on the level of preservation, but also on the level of conservation, where existing buildings are being transformed into modern uses; this is a phenomenon that can be seen in virtually every city in Canada, most notably in Vancouver, Victoria, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, and Halifax.

The other shift in downtown development is a strengthened demand for residential space in downtown, reflecting the number of family units that do not have children, or only have one child. These families prefer a central location, as they are less dependent on the space, educational facilities and playgrounds of the suburbs.

5.4 Regional and Metropolitan Government

With scattered settlements over a wide expanse of territory, Canada has evolved as a nation with many municipalities. Despite major restructuring in various provinces, Canada still contains approximately 2,000 municipalities, roughly one for every 10,000 people. The vast majority of these serve local requirements, but many of these municipalities are part of enlarged urban areas. For example, there

are 30 municipalities in the Montreal urban community, and 33 municipalities in the Mirabel airport community north of Montreal. There are over 900 municipalities in the province of Ontario.

As settlements have expanded, and major urban agglomerations have emerged, some major decisions have to be made on a larger scale. Also, inequalities have occurred, as in cases where residential properties have to be serviced in one municipality, and the commercial and industrial taxation to support them is available to another. As a result, it has been necessary to develop various forms of regional government, to cope with those activities which need to be dealt with on the broader scale. These activities typically include planning, the provision of water, sewer and pollution control services, the provision of solid waste disposal, transportation and transit, and in some cases regional parks, specialized educational facilities such as vocational schools and schools for the handicapped, and some integrated social services.

The arguments in favour of amalgamation are essentially the arguments of efficiency. There are economies of scale in bringing these services together, in preventing overlap, duplication and even outright conflict.

The arguments against amalgamation and consolidation of services have to do with equity and with participation. The community or the municipality is the level at which people can most strongly interact with their government, and metropolitan governments seem as faceless and as remote as provincial and federal governments.

In looking at trends in regional and metropolitan government in Canada, it is clear that the decade of the 1960's was dominated by the desire for efficiency, and a number of amalgamations and reorganizations occurred. The trend in the 1970's is oriented towards participation, and to the establishment of responsive forms of local government.

The range of solutions that has been used in Canada includes complete amalgamation, as in the case of Saint John, New Brunswick; two-tier systems, with the metropolitan government intervening, as in the case of Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, and other centres in Ontario and Quebec; and a range of special purpose agencies such as planning commissions, and transportation authorities organized at

the regional level.

Finally, the reflection of the changing attitudes is found in Winnipeg which moved to a two-tier system with the metropolitan government for reasons of efficiency, and has now evolved into a one-tier system with each representative district having a more local form of government.

6. INSIDE THE SETTLEMENTS: COMMUNITY

6.1 Housing

Housing is the most pervasive of all settlement questions and therefore is impossible to consider solely within the confines of one level of government or one stage in the hierarchy of settlement questions.

Housing is a national and provincial concern in three major ways. First, it is an important element in equity, as the provision of a basic minimum level of shelter is close to being a fundamental right. It is not recognized as such by statute, or in any bill of rights, but it is certainly implicit in public statements and in public policy.

Second, housing is a national concern because it links very strongly to two major national and provincial policy sets. The first of these is monetary and fiscal policy, with the most dramatic effect coming from monetary policy. With high interest rates and long repayment periods, a small change in interest rates can lead to a very substantial increase in the annual or monthly payments required for a home. If interest rates increase from 10% to 11%, the effective cost of housing increases by a factor of almost 10%. This means that fine tuning of the national economy through the medium of monetary policy ends up as very rough and hard tuning of the housing sector.

The other major national and provincial policy area which overlaps with housing is industrial development policy. The sensitivity of the housing market to relatively small interest rate fluctuations tends to develop a situation in which demand fluctuates very widely. This leads directly to fluctuations in employment in the construction sector, and indirectly to substantial variations in the demand for such products as lumber, cement, modular housing units, windows, and doors. It may be said that the housing sector as a whole, including support industries, bears the burden of economic adjustment policies.

The third major level of concern at the national and provincial levels is the role of housing in planning the system of human settlements; if it is desired to direct

growth into certain areas, then it is necessary to provide housing in those areas. This is clearly a major part of the total settlements picture.

Within the urban region, the major concerns related to housing have to do with the provision of land and services. Typically, in Canada today, between one quarter and one third of the total cost of a new home is tied up in the cost of the land and the services upon that land. It is the function of planning and management at the urban region level to ensure that services are available, and to determine at least the maximum densities that may be permitted, if not to intervene directly to determine the average density of any given area.

But it is at the community level that the houses are actually built, that people ultimately transform a house into a home, and a subdivision into a neighbourhood or community.

It is in the housing sector, and in particular at the community level, that the greatest and most visible conflict emerges between, on one hand, the desire of Canadians for their own home, with land, with space, and with access to the city; and, on the other hand, the economic realities involved in the provision of housing. The basic cost of providing the kind of houses that Canadians want is far beyond what most Canadians can afford to pay.

Part of this is a function of the price of housing, for the Canadian dream home is an expensive kind of house; it has a large lot, with services extended at great cost and yet serving only a relatively small number of houses, and with few economies of scale in the construction process itself. The basic dilemma of affordability can be seen in terms of what in the Canada of 1976 is a very modest house, of perhaps 1,000 to 1,200 square feet on a lot of perhaps one sixth of an acre. This house would cost in the vicinity of \$40,000 in most of the middle level cities of Canada, and substantially more in some of the larger cities. Approximately \$10,000 of that cost would be for a fully serviced lot, and \$30,000 would be the price for the house itself.

The monthly payments on such a house, including taxes, would be a little over \$400. This requires a family income in the range of \$15,000 to \$20,000. This is 20-30% higher than the average family income of all Canadian families.

The dilemma is dramatized further by the additional costs that are associated with a Canadian dream home. Suburban houses, built at a density of 4 to 6 units per acre, are a great consumer of land. They need service by highways, typically demanding automobile access to a central city, because densities are not adequate to support any significant public transport option. The Canadian dream home also stands alone against the elements, and is therefore expensive to maintain, particularly in terms of heat energy.

The reality of recent years has been that many Canadians, perhaps most of the newly formed families in Canada, have simply been unable to afford that dream. The dream begins to evaporate in various ways. For some, the dream of spaciousness and privacy is abandoned, as families opt for townhouses and apartments. For others, the dream of ownership is abandoned, or at least postponed, and the rental option is pursued, typically in apartments. An emerging compromise is the condominium arrangement, either in apartments or townhouses. Typically, one of the additional attributes of condominium arrangements is the provision of a wide array of additional services, such as recreational facilities, workshops and entertainment areas.

People are rethinking the process by which housing is provided. First, people are questioning the dominantly private sector role of land development. Across the country, provinces and even individual towns and cities are moving ahead with various forms of land assembly. Properly managed, in concert with a land banking scheme, these approaches can introduce some stability into the residential land market, even though it is quite evident that the real costs of construction have to be reflected in prices, and the cost of serviced lots in public land assemblies has increased dramatically in the last five years of heightened inflation.

Others are questioning the process by which the units themselves are built. There are a number of successful examples of self help, where individuals and groups have organized to put in "sweat equity" and thereby reduce the monetary cost of their building. The cooperative housing program in Nova Scotia has been particularly successful; a number of Indian bands have succeeded in organizing their own home building capacity; and others, particularly in older city neighbourhoods have succeeded in working together to rehabilitate existing housing to modern standards, without pricing these units beyond the reach of the existing residents.

In the broadest terms, the situation has to be examined in terms of demand and supply. With rapid family formation, (as the baby boom is still a major influence on our demographics) there is a need for the building of between 250,000 and 300,000 units per annum. (Net household formation demands 220,000, rural-urban migration and losses to existing housing stock account for the rest.) On a straightforward market basis, supplemented only by support for public housing for very low income people and for senior citizens, there is a real demand, backed by cash, for only approximately 200,000 units. It is the great challenge at the national and provincial level to close that gap, primarily through easing the costs of entry into the housing market, and by making additional financing available, at relatively low interest rates, to those who can not now afford to own a house.

At the national and provincial level, the major policies are reflected in the newly expanded Assisted Home Ownership Program, and related programs of the federal government. This new program provides assistance primarily through low interest rates, to aid families in moving towards home ownership. In addition, public housing is financed through provincial and federal agencies, with particular emphasis on housing for senior citizens. In order to facilitate the private market in providing the necessary financing, loan guarantee programs are available.

Most recently, as part of the anti-inflation efforts of the senior levels of governments, rent control is appearing in a number of provincial statutes. The experience with rent control to date is not impressive, but it remains as the only readily available step which can protect low income families from being priced out of their homes. The most unfortunate side effect is that it deters developers from providing the number of apartment units that are really necessary.

At the level of the urban region, the key lies in planning. In order to reduce overall costs, which include the cost of services and the costs of access, planning is increasingly suggesting higher density solutions. An alternative approach, which would shift some of the burden from the individual to the public purse is contained in the most recent amendments to the National Housing Act, which provides for federal assistance to municipalities to cover part of the costs of providing services.

At the community level, housing is the core of the neighbourhood. Because the scale is relatively small, it is possible for citizens to organize and to make an input

into planning their own living environment. Groups can organize to protect neighbourhoods against expressways and other building projects, to rehabilitate existing housing, and even to organize their own home building programs to ensure the character and style of neighbourhood they want.

6.2 Neighbourhood

The neighbourhood is not just a place to live, to eat, to sleep, to procreate, to die. For most of us, it is our home, the still point in a turning world.

With increasingly rapid change, continuity is vital to our sanity. Ideally, the neighbourhood can provide that continuity and protect us against stress and alienation.

The neighbourhoods built since the end of the second World War, especially the lower and middle income neighbourhoods, have been typical of their age, built with a functionalism that reflects the overriding value of the last 20 years, namely economic efficiency. Neatly laid out subdivisions, with the trees removed, the houses standing proudly on 8,000 square feet of lawn and asphalt. In them, people have struggled, usually successfully, to make the houses into homes and the suburbs into neighbourhoods.

Recently, there are signs of a broad dissatisfaction with the sameness and the sterility of this traditional pattern. New services have been demanded, such as recreation and community centres. New design approaches are being taken, with curved streets, with the older trees left standing, and with townhouses and apartments mixed in with the 1,100 square foot ranch style houses.

Another indication of shifting tastes can be seen in a return to the past, a return to the older districts in the centre of virtually every Canadian city. The older neighbourhoods have already got established patterns, and other advantages such as convenient access to the downtown. The refurbishing of these districts or "white painting" is however a mixed blessing, as the original tenants, typically low income, are forced into less desirable and frequently more expensive accommodation. The example of DACHI, in Toronto is important, as it is an instance in which the

original residents have organized to take advantage of the conversions rather than be evicted by what is locally termed "progress".

The other major aspect of neighbourhoods is the emergence of a new level of local organization. Community associations are becoming more active, in some cases rebuilding their neighbourhoods, in some cases protesting the building of expressways such as Spadina, and in the extreme, even running their own transit systems. (In Ottawa, a community association ran an express bus service providing an important service for that community, and also incidentally making a profit).

Typically, these organizations are formed to protect the neighbourhood, and to protest against unwanted change, such as the intrusion of an expressway, or a highrise building. More and more often, they stay around as effective organizations which can initiate projects, rather than merely react to them. The organizations that effectively prevented the building of the Spadina expressway spawned other organizations which have been more involved in direct actions such as the rebuilding of the Annex area of Toronto, preserving that interesting and historically valuable neighbourhood.

And the Spadina experience tells us something else about neighbourhood. From the marshalling of protests, there has not only emerged a strong sense of community, but the politics of Toronto, of Ontario, and even of Canada have been changed, probably forever. At the neighbourhood level, people reacted and demonstrated that the expressway was no longer the guaranteed sure-fire popular project that it had been through the 1950's and 1960's. The broader system, the urban region, the province and the nation have read that message, and policies can now be seen to be changing to reflect that changed political reality. The neighbourhood is the foundation of settlements, and in important respects is the foundation of settlements policy.

6.3 Community Services

Whether it is the sound of children's laughter in the playground or the sight of an old woman offering bread to the pigeons, the sights and sounds of a healthy, vibrant neighbourhood are felt by the heart; for it is here that the human potential is released rather than stifled and forgotten.

A healthy community breaks down anonymity and gives each inhabitant a fundamental sense of belonging and a support to his personal identity and individuality. Whether it is a collection of 1,000 persons or 10,000 persons, the healthy community responds to our basic human needs for physical safety and security, for association with others and for personal fulfilment, and eases our search for these needs through a range of neighbourhood services. Each one of us needs, from time to time, relief from anxiety, a chat over the back fence or a solitary walk, and responsive community services will be able to embrace this complex and subtle range.

Physical health and well-being are provided for through such services as diagnostic clinics, fitness programs, and clinics that provide counselling on addiction, marital breakdown, and mental health. Association with others can be found through local dances, county fairs, church bazaars and the like.

And finally, each one of us needs opportunities in our life that expand our awareness and understanding of ourselves and others. A library, a concert or a quiet moment of contemplation in the park may provide the individual with just such an opportunity.

Our community services must also conform to our lifestyles. For example, the increased participation of women in the labour force has expanded the need for day care services. Unfortunately, this is a service that is lagging behind in many communities as it is either non-existent or high costs have made access prohibitive to middle income families who do not qualify for government subsidy under the Canada Assistance Plan.

With a greater proportion of the population in the labour force, a trend toward later store hours and one-stop shopping is emerging. Similarly, many clinics and community centres maintain evening hours to accommodate users' needs.

With more Canadians working shorter work weeks, there is increased leisure time. More recreational centres and public sports facilities are needed as Canadians take to such activities as photography, bicycling and jogging. Increasingly, local schools offer night courses in a vast array of subjects.

People are beginning to look at the resources available in the community, the schoolhouse, the park, the church halls, and to consider how these resources can be most effectively used to meet community needs.

6.4 The Rural Community

So much attention is focussed on the well publicized and large scale problems of metropolitan areas and major cities, that questions relating to small towns and villages, to the rural community, are sometimes overlooked. There is a tendency to assume that small towns are dying away, as people migrate to the larger cities. This generalization contains some elements of truth, but it neglects the true vitality of small town Canada, and the continuing needs of the rural economic base for service centres.

Using the definition that includes all incorporated and unincorporated communities under 10,000 people, the 1971 Census reports less than 8,000 small towns in Canada. These communities accounted for approximately 4 million people, or 18% of Canada's total population.

The major forces operating in small towns are the decline of rural employment associated with the dramatic increases in the productivity of labour in agriculture, and with declines in employment in forestry and fishing; and the growth pressure on communities that lie within reasonable commuting range of the growing metropolitan and major urban centres of the nation.

This is demonstrated dramatically in the recent growth performance of different sizes of community. Communities in the size range from 5,000 to 10,000 experienced population growth of over 60% between 1961 and 1971. However, at the other end of the scale, there was a steady and uniform decline in the population of communities of less than three hundred.

It is conventionally assumed that the decline of the smallest communities will continue to the point of their total disappearance, and that only the large can survive in a world that lives by economies of scale. There is a resulting tendency to talk blithely about "rural adjustment", a technocratic phrase which essentially means closing things down with as little fuss as possible.

There are two basic reasons to doubt the conventional wisdom. First, the last two decades of the twentieth century are expected to be periods of substantial expansion in agricultural production, leading to significant growth in the economic base of rural Canada. Given the technological nature of modern agriculture, this may not do very much for communities below three hundred people, but it will most certainly provide stronger economic reasons for the expansion and continuation of communities of over 1,000 people.

Second, this view ignores the fundamental vitality of rural communities of Canada. There are numerous examples of communities defying the pundits who have condemned them to death.

Rural communities have a great deal to offer Canada, as service centres for a growing agriculture and as places which offer a genuine alternative in lifestyle to that found in larger cities.

The vitality of the traditional rural community cannot be demonstrated by statistics, but rather by examples that come into focus from time to time. For example, when Peter Gzowski was hosting the program "This Country In The Morning" on CBC radio, a substantial part of the response came from rural Canada, demonstrating wit and sophistication, giving examples of true community spirit and discovering a lode of local history, that was otherwise in danger of being lost from the public memory.

Another example is 'Suttles and Seawinds', the organization in Nova Scotia which has translated the traditional craftsmanship in quilting and related skills into a significant export business, and has brought new confidence and new income to the rural communities of Southwestern Nova Scotia.

And in Tignish, Prince Edward Island, people organized effectively to bring a health centre to their community when all the bureaucrats and the development plan had decided otherwise.

How many citizen associations in big cities have been so successful?

This concept of organizing for community benefit is a tradition of rural life. It becomes innovative, however, when it is applied in a society that is increasingly bureaucratized. To the city dwellers whose standard of living is increased by money-bought and machine-made products, there is a lesson that is slowly being learned, and which can benefit all Canadians.

6.5 The Resource Community

While new resource towns have developed in many countries, the number of them and their relative importance are unique features of Canada's development. Although not large in terms of population numbers, they nevertheless play a critical role in the economy of the nation. The building of such towns has been especially marked since World War II, reflecting the accelerated development of mineral, forest and water power resources. The number of new resource towns is likely to increase in the future as the frontier of resource development continues to move progressively northward.

One of the distinguishing features of a large number of these communities is that they were planned from scratch; that is to say, they were built in accordance with a preconceived Town Plan. As a result, these towns have been able to provide housing accommodations and public utilities of a type and quality not emulated in many ordinary Canadian towns of the same population.

However, while these resource towns are, in many cases, model communities, the one compelling economic fact of life that the planners and builders, did not, or could not, plan for was their dependence on a single industrial enterprise.

As a result, Canadian resource communities have often followed a "boom and bust" pattern of growth. Canada today, from Newfoundland to British Columbia and stretching northward to the Yukon and Northwest Territories, is studded with the ghosts of former resource towns that "went broke" as resoundingly as they boomed. The social cost of ghost towns - to the private developer, the provincial government and the workers and families living in these communities is enormous.

In recent years, however, a basic change has occurred in the approach toward building these towns. They are now being built as permanent communities, with housing, paved roads, sewer systems, parks, playgrounds and other urban amenities of a quality comparable to that of ordinary urban areas. These facilities of course require large investments of private and social capital.

Several factors have caused the shift to permanent communities. The type of enterprise responsible for resource development in Canada has changed. The small independent prospector has given way to the large, highly capitalized corporation, whose investment is enormous and long-term. As a consequence, today's resource developer is desirous of attracting and maintaining a stable work force.

At the same time, technological changes have been occurring in resource industries, thereby creating a need for more skilled workers. Recruited in the main from the southern urban centres, these workers cannot be attracted to the remote regions of northern Canada by high wages alone; they also want amenities for their families: housing, schools, playgrounds and shops.

Thus, resource communities are now being planned differently as efforts are being made to reflect their special social, geographical and economic circumstances. For example, resource towns are trying to diversify the economic activity on which they are based. Through this diversification, the community can broaden its employment base and thereby introduce permanence and stability.

At the same time, technological changes have been occurring to cope with the harsh climate. In many northern communities the presence of bedrock or permafrost prohibits burial of service lines. As a result, boxed surface utilities are employed. Similarly, the climate is frequently too harsh to encourage people to go outdoors; enclosed shopping complexes and recreation centres have provided a solution.

Finally, it has been realized that a community is much more than a skeleton of water, sewer, roads and electric power. A concern for the inhabitants is needed so that people can turn their houses into homes and their community into a viable and responsive centre. Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, 500 miles north of Winnipeg, is a resource community that demonstrates a concern and an understanding of the town

as a centre of social interaction, a centre of consumption, as well as a cluster of houses and a place for people to work.

7. EMERGING THEMES

This chronicle of the successes and frustrations faced by Canada in the field of human settlements often seems to reflect primarily the diversity of a large nation, settled by many different peoples in a wide range of geographical and climatic conditions. Common threads are difficult to find, particularly at the concrete level of physical projects. After all, it is unlikely that the underground city in Montreal, designed for long, cold winters, will be reproduced intact in Vancouver, with its balmy coastal climate. Even such differences as historical patterns of land ownership or local government structure will lead to markedly different approaches between cities as geographically similar as Saskatoon and Winnipeg.

But there are clearly identifiable forces and themes which lie behind the emerging policies and programs for human settlements in Canada.

The long term trend is reflecting the emergence of a distinctive Canadian form of reformed capitalism. The capitalist system, including private ownership and free markets, has served Canada well. The economy has developed strongly and provided Canadians with one of the highest standards of living in the world. However, in its unrestrained form, such an economic system leaves room for the creation of sharp divisions between the "haves and have nots" and between rich and poor.

Traditionally, governments have supported enterprise, especially in frontier areas, but over time, governments have moved to protect individuals and minority groups from exploitation. In today's Canada, Keynesian management of the economy is directed to the maintenance of aggregate demand. Capital investment is encouraged by capital cost allowances in the taxation system, and by public sector development of vital infrastructure, notably in the transportation and communication sectors. But this investment is increasingly directed to underdeveloped areas of Canada, through such techniques as industrial incentive grants and special infrastructure support. Also, industrial sectors in which monopolist tendencies are particularly strong, or in which society demands that services be made universal, are subjected to government control and in some cases are directly operated by public sector enterprises.

The dominant trend has been to intervene to respect the role of the individual. There has been an almost continuous process of social reform, redistributing the national wealth through such means as income support, pensions, and universal health and education services.

Canadians can now boast that minimum individual maintenance needs are provided for all citizens, at a scale and quality that is as generous as may be found in any nation in the world.

This has been a slow but steady evolutionary process but in recent years there have been some major departures from this slow continuum. The pace of change has speeded up. The prime forces behind these changes have been important shifts in world situations. There has been worldwide concern with the problems of the environment. The energy crisis has emerged, and with this there has also been world concern for the sharing of resources, for responsible resource management, and for a new international economic order.

These external realities have struck sympathetic chords with many Canadians. There has been increasing domestic concern about the environment. Many Canadians have been questioning the pattern of our energy and other resource use. There has been a growing concern that with basic material needs met, national happiness could no longer be simply equated with Gross National Product. Human needs are deeper and more subtle than the GNP and can not be satisfied merely by more cars, more appliances, and fancier deodorant sprays.

The successive world crises, accompanied by a broad economic recession, have also intensified the need for careful setting of priorities, the need to get more for less, the need to look at low cost solutions. This has been particularly evident at the local government level where tax bases are most restricted, and yet where demands or expectations have risen most.

In addition, the fundamental concern for the individual has re-emerged as a major political issue. This reflects the rapid growth of governments and, through the 1960's, a strong trend to conglomeration in the private sector leading to the dominance of many industrial sectors by very large industrial enterprises, both national and multi-national.

Just as government control has been seen as necessary to protect the individual from various kinds of exploitation, so now new means are sought to protect individuals from governments and their agencies which have become so large as to be independent forces, only in limited ways subject to political control by the people at large.

There is also a concern that extensive government control can substitute legality, the mindless and joyless obedience to statute, for a true sense of public ethics and morality; and the problems of bigness have also been felt inside these governments. It is evident that many problems, and in particular human settlement problems, are complex and inter-related, and thus new mechanisms are required to bring various agencies and levels of governments together.

Out of these changing values, there emerge a number of important changes in attitudes and demands. Some of these are strong movements, while others are just beginning to be felt. All of them will bring about changes in the nature of human settlements policy in Canada.

1. The Movement From a Production Oriented Ethic Towards a Conservation Ethic.

Gross National Product is an accurate measure of what a society produces and what a society consumes. However, it is supposedly value-neutral, and so it measures all activities and attributes equal value to them. It is becoming increasingly evident that production can be increased by inefficiencies, by waste, and by frenzied work to correct the side effects of other activities. Thus, pollution increases GNP, because pollution control systems are necessary and cost money and employ labour.

The new emphasis is on re-cycling of materials, on the avoidance of waste, and indeed on questioning the whole nature and pattern of consumption within Canadian society.

2. An Increasing Shift of Responsibility for Resource Development from the Private Sector to the Public Sector, with Accompanying Emphasis on Resource Management.

The concern for waste, for the conservation of resources, is reflected in higher royalties and taxes on mineral products, and in particular on energy materials such as petroleum and electricity. Restraints are not only being applied at the production level, but at the consumption level too. Speed limits and price increases are being introduced to discourage excess energy use. Some jurisdictions are actively considering special support to industries which use recycled materials, perhaps along with increased taxes on basic resource extraction.

3. A Similar Shift From Private to Public Control in the Management and Use of Land.

In terms of public policy, land is being treated as a public good, rather than as a purely private good. The total freedom of private property rights, with all their associated side effects, seems to be a thing of the past. Not only is there zoning, an instrument which is essentially a protection of private rights, but there is a whole array of new devices which limit the freedom of individuals to use land as they wish, without respect to the public good. New development controls are being introduced; regulations are being applied which limit nonresident ownership; at the provincial level, steps are being taken to preserve particularly important pieces of land, sometimes through expropriation, sometimes through open market acquisition, and sometimes through controls such as used by the B.C. Land Commission; the historic concept of rights of access is being brought back into common usage, to provide access to recreation areas and watercourses and other public facilities as long as that access right does not damage the private property across which it is exercised.

4. There are Signs of a Shifting Emphasis From Economic and Physical Aspects of Society Towards Social and Aesthetic Aspects.

Fundamental to this shift of values is a profound and widespread questioning of the value of progress. Many aspects of technological progress have led to unpleasant side effects, and their true net benefit to society is highly questionable. Despite

continuing, much heralded increases in Gross National Product, most people in Canada do not perceive themselves to be as much better off as the statistics would indicate. When the whole world is considered, progress has been substantial, but there are more people starving today than there were at the turn of the century.

This is all being reflected in changing demands on government, particularly at the local level. Residents' associations, preservation committees, and other interest groups are demonstrating concern for such matters as parks, pedestrian areas, heritage conservation and so on. These have emerged as real issues in the Canadian urban scene.

5. Government Programs, Particularly at the Local Level, are Moving Away from High Technology, High Capital Intensive Solutions Towards Low Cost Solutions.

With limited tax bases, and with no desire at all to increase taxes, new approaches to problems are emerging. Rather than accepting problem definitions, ways are being sought to avoid problems, through such techniques as staggering working hours, encouraging car pools, and advising people to turn lights out and not to leave taps dripping water and wasting gallons every day.

6. There is Demand for Public Participation in Major Decisions in Both Public and Private Sectors.

With large institutions, and with the interconnectedness of human settlements, the fundamental demand is for more openness in all decision making processes. People are demanding the right to be informed.

Participation in the planning and implementation processes of government has proved in recent years to be popular to talk about and very difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, it is quite evident that participation is going to be a continuing part of future activities, and it is at the human settlement level that participation can be most effective, because it is at that level that particular projects and activities can be discussed, in the context of their immediate impact on the individual and on the neighbourhood in which people live. This reaction is a major input into policy formulation.

7. The Emergence of Community Enterprise and Self-Help

With increasing demands on government, accompanied by tight financial situations and a more slowly expanding tax base, it is evident that government cannot shoulder all individual and collective responsibilities. Such government programs as the Local Initiatives Program and Opportunities for Youth have demonstrated that there is a great deal of latent initiative in community organizations across the country. Faced with the problem of getting important community projects underway, many communities are taking cooperative action, to develop on their own such things as health centres, playgrounds, and day care centres. This not only reduces the burdens on general tax payers, but also develops an intense spirit of community and neighbourhood.

8. There are Demands for Decentralization of Authority from Senior Levels of Government to Metropolitan Areas, to Municipalities and to Neighbourhoods.

This shift reflects the concern for participation, and also the changing emphasis away from purely efficiency criteria towards criteria of equity. The community is the focal point through which programs are delivered, and the unique situation of each community makes it necessary that programs and projects be tailored to specific needs.

9. The Emergence of Human Settlements as the Focal Point for Programs and the Development of New Forms of Intergovernmental Cooperation

A further major element in government action is an integration of the various levels of government within the context of strategic planning and strategic action. The human settlement, the town or the city, is the place in which the actions of governments ultimately take on reality. However careful and delicate the process by which the division of powers is clarified, effective action must sprout from the common will of all levels of government, and the concerted actions of all levels of government. Since the creation of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, a great deal of attention is being paid to tri-level committees and tri-level activities. It has not been an easy process, because trust is never easy to come by. It is however a very necessary process.

10. The Consideration of Major Decisions in the Context of World Situations

Canadians are slowly coming to see themselves as citizens of the world, with substantial world responsibilities. This is fundamentally a question of national political morality, a question which will influence attitudes towards resource management and exploitation, and in particular raises important questions in relation to Canadian agricultural production. Canada is one of the very few nations of the world with an agricultural surplus, and has the capacity for significant expansion, to perhaps double present production levels. In terms of the prevailing international market, and in terms of prevailing domestic market, Canadian agricultural production has not been expanding, as agricultural policy has emphasized the balancing of supply and demand by careful supply management. In the long run, Canada's agricultural supplies have an important role to play in the world situation. This concern is beginning to be reflected in measures to conserve agricultural land from urban encroachment, as it is the best lands that are most directly threatened at the present time.

For the next decade or more, basic human settlement questions relate to how far these changes will go.

- To what extent will land undergo a full transition from a private to a public good?
- Will resource exploitation and consumption be subjected to major controls such as rationing, compulsory recycling and markedly increased taxation burdens?
- Will the next decade see the emergence of a community enterprise or selfhelp sector as a major economic sector on a par with large private and public enterprises?
- Will provinces and federal agencies strengthen their role in human settlements or will they transfer some of their powers and finances to the local level, especially the urban region level?
- Will the whole hierarchical system of public finance be amended to provide more discriminatory financing to the local level, with senior levels only responsible for macro level provision of services?
- Will the future strength of settlements and the nature and style of housing change radically toward more tightly-knit clustering, to higher density, to row housing and so on in response to financial and resource use pressures?

- Will decision processes be opened up, or will large governments and corporations intensify their closed door control over basic decision making?
- Will agricultural and other resources in Canada be directed to world needs, and managed with these needs in mind, or will they continue to be developed primarily in terms of price support and the national market?
- Will Canadian aid in various forms move towards 1% of GNP, as targeted by international aid agencies?

These are the challenges. This comes down to a question of how self-interest is perceived by Canadians. Are these problems seen through the eyes of world citizens or of isolated actors in the frozen north? Are Canadians the prisoners of today or the custodians of tomorrow?

